

Walking Audit

Walking audits are site inspections undertaken initially to review the streets and the problems along them. From the team's visit and residents' input during the audit, the following conclusions were drawn:

The neighborhood is alive with children playing. People of all ages live in Waimanalo and are often outdoors, being active and socializing. There is a great sense of community pride as people share common Hawaiian values, and enjoy the prime beach location. Waimanalo has a strong sense of identity. Many people own and have even built their own homes. Waimanalo is one of three large plats of Hawaiian Homestead Lands.

The main roads through the area (Mekia Street, Kakaina Street and Poalima Avenue) have a pavement width of 20 feet and a 40-foot right-of-way. No curb and gutter treatments are used on these streets. Mekia Street has been characterized by residents and city staff as a "cut through" road. According to local residents, drivers will travel mauka southwest on Mekia Street to get to Kakaina and Waikupanaha Streets (see map, pp. 10-11). This traffic has no need to stop or even slow until the intersection with Kakaina Street which has caused many speeding problems. There are no permanent planter strips or paved sidewalks on any of the roads. Most cars park on the unimproved sidewalk area rather than on the street pavement. Parking density is moderate. Several individuals along Mekia Street dislike the parking on the unimproved sidewalk and have placed signs and barriers to prevent people from parking in these areas.

Mekia Street, makai bound, widens out at the intersection with Lukanela Street and remains at a 32-foot width until the intersection with Kalanianoʻe Highway. This type of a funnel-shaped intersection encourages excessive and inappropriate use of the road. There are many walkers and bicyclists in this area and the heavy traffic prevents pedestrians from using the right-of way with ease and comfort.

Traffic travels above the speed limit on Mekia Street and similar behavior was observed on Poalima, Kakaina, and Mahailua Streets. The intersection of Kakaina and Mekia Streets has limited sight distances, as does the intersection of Poalima and Hihimanu Streets.

All of the roads in the neighborhood are posted at 25 miles per hour. This is a commonly posted speed limit for residential neighborhoods, but it is easily, and often broken. Because the roads have little topographical variation and are generally straight, the driver feels comfortable traveling at speeds greater than the speed limit.

During the walking audit, numerous residents were observed walking, bicycling, pushing strollers, jogging, skateboarding and playing in the street. Because of the neighborhood's proximity to the beach and commercial locations, it is convenient for residents to walk or bicycle to their destination. These types of trips allow people to enjoy their beautiful surroundings and interact with their neighbors while going about their business. These are the types of trips that build stronger communities and should be encouraged by pedestrian friendly and bicycle friendly street design.

Charrette Agenda

- I Introduction
- II Presentation
- III What are the Tools?
- IV Brainstorming the Big Problems
- V Voting on Priorities
- VI Design Tables
- VII Group Reports
- VIII Closing

An evening charrette was held on Tuesday, September 7, 1999, between 6:00 and 9:00 pm. Thirty-eight residents attended to learn the process, tools and applications of traffic calming. Following a presentation on traffic calming by Dan Burden, residents were asked to "Identify the Big Problems." Residents discussed the need to slow traffic at all costs for the safety of the children. Mekia Street neighbors addressed the speeding problem by selecting a variety of traffic calming tools and using their own knowledge to propose solutions.



PUBLIC CONSENSUS

The Mekia Street Neighborhood charrette provided sufficient direction to permit the design team to go forward with both the system development and actual design of various traffic calming features. The most important product of a charrette is reaching neighborhood "ownership" of the problem, developing consensus and an ongoing willingness to work with the neighborhood board, elected officials and City/County staff to achieve early and appropriate re-construction of roadways and intersections. The following problems and potential solutions were identified:

The problems identified by residents are:

- Poalima intersection, can't see back at angle over shoulder
- Blind corner at bend on Mekia Street
- Fatalities at Kakaina and Mahailua Streets
- People cutting corner at Mekia Street
- Lack of paved sidewalks
- Speeding traffic
- Dangerous for kids playing in the street
- Too much traffic on Mekia Street

During the brainstorming session, residents identified some potential solutions to traffic problems:

- What about speed humps
- More signs for Keiki
- Draw more pavement markings
- Can Mekia Street be a dead end or partial closing?
- Set speed limit at 15 mph
- A roundabout at the "Y"
- Neck downs at end of street
- Narrow down road with bulbouts or short medians



A table design session followed. Residents worked in small groups around a table and map and identified the following potential action items. The residents' suggestions were handed over to the traffic calming engineers to determine the most effective treatment for each problem location.

- ☑ Mini circle at Poalima and Mekia Streets
- ☑ Roundabout at Poalima and Hihimanu Streets
- ☑ Speed tables on Mekia Street
- ☑ Dead end at Mekia Street
- ☑ Speed tables on Poalima Street
- ☑ 90-degree T intersection at Mekia and Kakaina Streets
- ☑ Children at Play Signs on Mekia and Poalima Streets
- ☑ No parking at the elbow on Poalima Street
- ☑ Stop sign at Poalima and Mekia Streets
- ☑ Bulbout or choker at Lukanela and Mekia Streets

STUDY AREA

Waimanalo residents are served by the Kalanianoʻle Highway on the makai side of the neighborhood. Traffic from the highway often cuts through the Mekia street neighborhood heading both mauka and makai. Waimanalo residents take great pride in their families, their land and their community. This traffic calming process is an effort to protect and preserve the things residents of the area value most, their community, and their quality of life. This process is an opportunity for residents to voice their opinions and make positive changes in their community.

